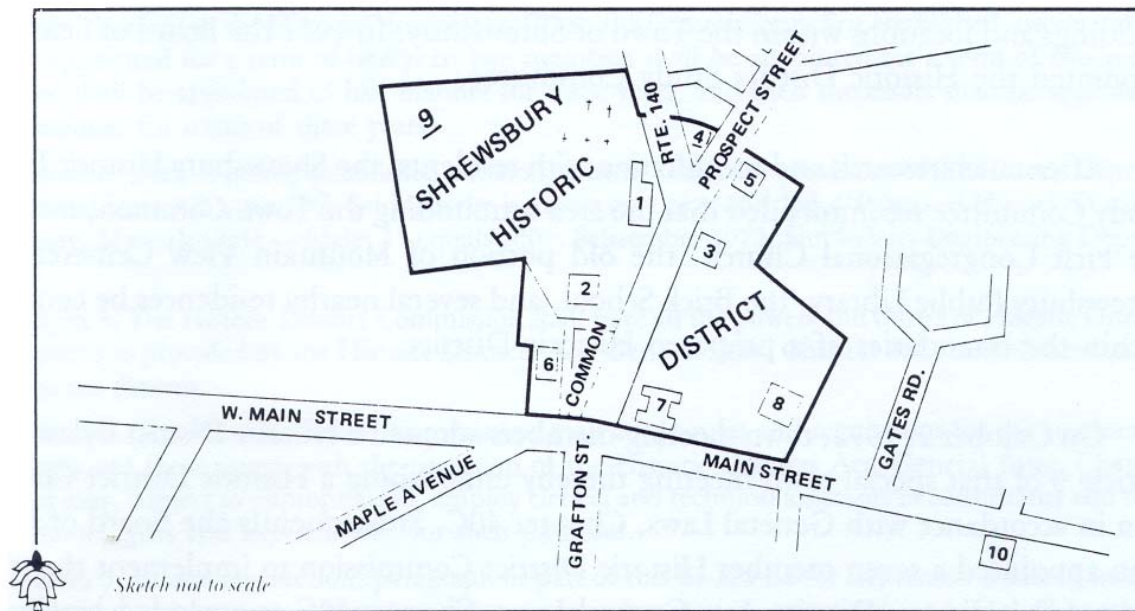


*Town of Shrewsbury*  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**



## ***Purpose of a Historic District***

To preserve and protect distinctive characteristics of buildings, grounds, and places historically significant within the Town of Shrewsbury through the maintenance and improvement of settings for such buildings, grounds, and places and the preservation of design compatible therewith.



## **SHREWSBURY HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

Included in the Shrewsbury Historic Districts:

1. First Congregational Church, Church Road 1723
2. The Brick School, Church Road, 1830
3. Jonas Stone House, 2 Prospect Street, 1822
4. Samuel Haven House, 7 Prospect Street, 1816
5. Slocum House, 10 Prospect Street, 1806
6. Sumner House, 5 Church Road, 1797
7. Shrewsbury Free Public Library, 1903
8. Rev. George Allen House, 621 Main Street, 1825
9. Mountain View Cemetery, 1731
10. Artemas Ward Homestead, 786 Main Street, 1730, A Historic District

# ***Shrewsbury Historic Districts***

## **Brief History**

In 1970 and 1971 several members of the Shrewsbury Historical Society expressed an interest in preserving various structures and residences surrounding the Town Common. They approached the Board of Selectmen and asked that a Historic District Committee be appointed as a preliminary step leading to the preservation of certain historic buildings and locations within the Town of Shrewsbury. In 1971 the Board of Selectmen appointed the Historic District Study Committee.

After much research and consultation with residents, the Shrewsbury Historic District Study Committee recommended that the area surrounding the Town Common, including the First Congregational Church, the old portion of Mountain View Cemetery, the Shrewsbury Public Library, the Brick School, and several nearby residences be contained within the boundaries of a proposed Historic District.

On October 2, 1972, town meeting members adopted a Historic District Bylaw under Article 9 of that special town meeting thereby establishing a Historic District Commission in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 40C as amended by Chapter 359, Acts of 1971. Members appointed included an architect, a realtor, several residents of the proposed district, and several members of the Shrewsbury Historical Society.

On May 27, 1975, town meeting members voted to amend Section 2 of the Historic District Bylaw and include the following property within a Historic District:

Main Street – Assessors Tax Plate 23, Parcel 137 (The Artemas Ward Property).

Several other proposals to extend the present Historic Districts or to establish a separate Historic Commission were defeated by the town meeting.

We hop that sometime in the future a comprehensive inventory will be made of early homes within the Town of Shrewsbury so that residents will be able to identify the homes of early settlers and historic sites outside the boundaries of the present Historic Districts. Some communities have employed consultants to prepare such inventories in order to preserve for future generations some knowledge of Shrewsbury's past history as reflected by the architecture of these early Shrewsbury buildings.

## ***Historic District By-Law***

**ARTICLE 9:** Unanimously voted that the Town adopt the following by-law:

**Section 1.** There is hereby established a Historic District Commission under the provision of the "Historic District Act," General Laws, Chapter 40C, consisting of seven members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, including one member, where possible, from two nominees submitted by the Shrewsbury Historical Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities; one member, where possible, from two nominees of the Massachusetts state chapter of The American Institute of Architects; and one member, where possible, from two nominees of the Board of Realtors covering Shrewsbury. One or more shall, where possible, be a resident of a Historic District established in Shrewsbury pursuant to the Historic Districts Act. When the Commission is first established, two members shall be appointed for a term of one year; two members shall be appointed for a term of two years, and three shall be appointed in like manner for three years; and their successors shall be appointed in like manner for terms of three years.

**Section 2.** There is hereby established a Historic District under the provisions of the Historic Districts Act, General Laws, Chapter 40C. Said District is shown on a plan entitled, "Proposed Historic District, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts – Scale: 1" equals 100', September 1972, Shrewsbury Engineering Department."

**Section 3.** The Historic District Commission shall have all the powers and duties of Historic District Commission as provided by the Historic Districts Act, General Laws, Chapter 40C, and of subsequent amendments thereto.

**Section 4.** The Historic District Commission shall adopt rules and regulations for the conduct of its business no inconsistent with the provision of the Historic Districts Act, General Laws, Chapter 40C, and may, subject to appropriation, employ clerical and technical assistants or consultants and may accept money gifts and expend same for such purposes.

**Section 5.** In case any section, paragraph or part of this by-law be for any reason declared invalid or unconstitutional by a court of last resort, every other section, paragraph or part shall continue in full force and effect.

**Section 6.** The authority of the Historic District Commission shall not extend to the review of any of the following categories of buildings, structures, or exterior architectural features in the Historic District established by Paragraph 2, above:

- (a) Temporary structures or signs, subject, however, to such conditions as to duration of use, location, lighting, removal and similar matters as the Commission may reasonably specify;
- (b) Terraces, walks, driveways, sidewalks and similar structures, or any one or more of them, provided that any such structure is substantially at grade level;
- (c) Storm doors and windows, screens, window air conditioners, lighting fixtures, antennae and similar appurtenances, or any one or more of them;
- (d) Signs of not more than one square foot in area in connection with the use of a residence for a customary home occupation or for professional purposes, provided only one such sign is displayed in connection with each residence and if illuminated is illuminated only indirectly; and one sign in connection with the nonresidential use of each building or structure which is not more than twelve square feet in area, consisting of letter painted on wood without symbol or trademark and if illuminated is illuminated only indirectly; or either of them.
- (e) The reconstruction, substantially similar in exterior design, of a building, structure or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm or other disaster, provided such reconstruction is begun within one year thereafter and carried forward with due diligence.

Adopted by vote of the Town on October 2, 1972, and approved by the Attorney General on January 10, 1973.

A TRUE COPY

ATTEST:

Ernest A. Tosi, Town Clerk  
Published, Jan. 22, 23, 24, 1973

# **Historic District Commission Town of Shrewsbury Rules and Regulations**

1. This Commission shall be known as the Historic District Commission of Shrewsbury, herein afterwards referred to as the "Commission."

2. The Commission shall meet on a regular monthly basis, except during the months of July and August, and at such other times as the Commission shall determine.

3. The Commission shall concern itself with the duties of the Historic District and with the requests of the residents and business properties within that district as regards changes in exterior architectural features; new buildings; additions, demolitions, and renovation of the exteriors; and to all appurtenances, pursuant to the Historic District By-Law and in accordance with G.L.c.40C, as amended.

4. All applications for Certificate of Appropriateness shall be made in writing upon the forms available at the office of the Building Inspector. Such applications shall be filed with the Commission at a Commission meeting. The Certificate of Appropriateness shall normally be processed in three stages:

Stage One – Preliminary: The applicant shall outline general nature of proposed work to determine its acceptability. Snapshots of existing conditions and sketches of changes will allow the Commission to better evaluate appropriateness. The intention of this approval stage is to eliminate applicant's effort in further advancing obviously inappropriate work.

Stage Two – Final Drawings: The applicant shall submit fully detailed construction drawings indicating actual dimensions, materials, and colors for consideration of the Commission in determination of appropriateness. A Building Permit will not be issued without the Commission's approval of this stage.

Stage Three – Completed Construction: should construction changes be necessary the applicant shall revise construction drawings to reflect actual as-built conditions. Changes in the work affecting appropriateness will require corrective work prior to Commission's approval of this stage. An Occupancy Permit will not be issued without the Commission's approval of this stage.

On work of minor impact on appropriateness the Commission may elect to consolidate approval of various stages. The applicant may elect to omit the Preliminary approval and advance directly to the Stage Two – Final Drawing approval.

5. A hearing will be held if deemed necessary by the Commission in accordance with G.L. c.40C, sec. 11, amended.

6. The Commission shall approve or deny an application or request further information as appropriate in accordance with G.L. c.40C as amended.

7. The Building Inspector shall insure that the construction drawings shall be in accordance with the drawings approved by the Commission.

8. When drawings have been approved by the Commission, no changes or modification shall be made unless an amendment to the original drawings has been filed with and approved by the Commission.

9. Changing the exterior color of paint on structures within the District shall require approval by the Commission.

10. Artificial siding materials are not allowed on structures within the District, but the Commission may review special circumstances and allow artificial siding in unusual cases.

11. There shall be no changes in landscaping and on-site structures, including stone walls, fences, steps, and paving without a review of appropriateness by the Commission.

12. Exterior architectural features shall mean such portion of the exterior of a building or structure as is open to view from a public way, public park, or public building, including but not limited to the architectural style and general arrangement and setting thereof; the kind, color, and texture of exterior building materials; the color of paint or other materials applied to exterior surfaces; and the type and style of windows, doors, lights, signs, and other appurtenant exterior features.

*Approved by Shrewsbury Historic District Commission 6/7/84  
Published June 21, 1984*

Certificate of Appropriateness is required for changing the color of exterior materials on buildings within the Historic District. Acceptable colors in the following ranges will possibly meet Commission approval upon application for a Certificate of Appropriateness:

<u>ELEMENTS</u>	<u>COLORS</u>
Shingles and clapboards	White, cream, pale yellow
Doors	White, dark green, black
Shutters	Dark green, black
Chimneys and Foundations	Natural or same color as selected for clapboards
Trim	White or same color as selected for clapboards

Colors other than those listed may be used if approval of the Commission is granted prior to the application of paint.

Adopted by a vote of the Historic District Commission on September 17, 1987.

Published in the Worcester Telegram on November 25, 1987.

# Historic Districts

## *Questions and Answers*

### *1. Who must Apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness?*

Whenever exterior changes visible from a public way, street, park or public building are contemplated in exterior architectural features of buildings or certain items of site landscaping. These changes include new buildings, additions, demolitions, and renovations of exteriors, and to all appurtenances pursuant to the Historic District Bylaw and in accordance with Gen. Laws, Chapter 40C as amended.

### *2. How is Application Made?*

By completing an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness according to the instructions included with the application.

### *3. What is the Historic District Commission?*

The Commission consists of seven townspeople appointed by the Board of Selectmen for the purpose of reviewing application for a Certificate of Appropriateness before changes are made to exterior features of buildings or certain aspects of landscaping within the boundaries of the Historic District.

### *4. Where May an Applicant Obtain More Information?*

Inquiries may be made to the Historic District Commission at its regular monthly meeting at the Municipal Building, 100 Maple Ave., usually on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. except during July and August, when the Commission does not hold regular meetings.

### *5. What Rules and Regulations Have Been Adopted by the District Commission?*

A copy of the Rules and Regulations adopted by the Shrewsbury Historic District Commission is attached.

### *6. What is the National Register?*

It is a Nation Register of building important to the nation as well as to the local government. National Register designation protects buildings or districts from encroachment by federally funded projects. In addition some buildings may be eligible for certain tax advantages or federal grants. The Shrewsbury Historic District is included in the National Register, as is the First Congregational Church, etc.

### *7. What About Tax Advantages?*

It is the responsibility of the applicant for a Certificate of Appropriateness to ascertain what tax advantages may occur in cases of building rehabilitation within the Historic District. Consult the Massachusetts Historical Commission before beginning such construction.

### *8. Does Zoning Bylaw also Apply?*

Yes, it does.

### *9. What is the Relationship Between the Building Inspector and the Historic District Commission?*

A Certificate of Appropriateness must be obtained before a property owner receives a building permit except for unusual circumstances when the Building Inspector determines that public safety is in jeopardy.

### *10. Does the Historic District Commission do Genealogical Research and Documentation of Early Buildings?*

At present the Historic District Commission is not prepared to do genealogical research or to inventory early homes and structures within the Town of Shrewsbury.

### *11. May Structures Outside the Boundaries of a Historic District be Placed on the National Register?*

Yes, the Massachusetts Historical Commission has a procedure for placing structures on the National Register.

### *12. May Interior Work be Done on a Structure without Applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness?*

Yes, unless the interior changes require exterior alterations such as modification of windows. However, interior work is subject to various permits for plumbing, wiring, etc., as required by those departments.